

105TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 285

Expressing the sense of the Senate that all necessary steps should be taken
to ensure the elections to be held in Gabon are free and fair.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 5 (legislative day, OCTOBER 2), 1998

Mr. LUGAR submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the
Committee on Foreign Relations

OCTOBER 21 (legislative day, OCTOBER 2), 1998

Committee discharged; considered, amended, and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate that all necessary steps
should be taken to ensure the elections to be held in
Gabon are free and fair.

Whereas Gabon is a heavily forested and oil-rich country on
the west coast of Central Africa;

Whereas Gabon gained independence from France in 1960;

Whereas Gabon is scheduled to hold national elections in De-
cember 1998 for the purpose of electing a President;

Whereas the Government of Gabon was subject to single-
party rule until 1990 and only one person has held the
office of the President since 1967;

Whereas the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) and the African American Institute (AAI) served as observers during the organization of the 1993 Presidential and legislative elections in Gabon and found widespread electoral irregularities;

Whereas the Government of Gabon is a signatory to the Paris Accords of 1994, which was approved by national referendum in July 1995, and was instituted to provide for a state of law guaranteeing basic individual freedoms and the organization of free and fair elections under a new independent national election commission;

Whereas the people of Gabon have demonstrated their support for the democratic process through the formation of numerous political parties since 1990 and their strong participation in prior elections; and

Whereas it is in the interest of the United States to promote political and economic freedom in Africa and throughout the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes and commends those Gabonese who have demonstrated their love for free and fair elections;

(2) commends the Government of Gabon for inviting the International Foundation for Election Systems to perform a pre-election assessment study;

(3) calls on the Government of Gabon to—

(A) take further measures to ensure the organization and administration of a transparent and credible election and to ensure that the national

election commission is able to independently carry out its duties; and

(B) further welcome the International Foundation for Election Systems, the National Democratic Institute, the International Republican Institute, and other appropriate national and international nongovernmental organizations to aid the organization of, and to monitor, the December 1998 Presidential election in Gabon, in an effort to assist the government in ensuring that the elections are free and fair;

(4) urges the United States Government to continue to work with the international community, and through appropriate nongovernmental organizations, to help create an environment which guarantees free and fair elections; and

(5) urges the United States Government and the international community to continue to encourage and support the institutionalization of democratic processes and the establishment of conditions for good governance in Gabon.

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